GOD's CALL
TO
Unconverted SINNERS
To turn to the LORD.

Plainly shewing every poor Sinner the Miserableness of his Estate, and how great an Enemy he is to himself, tho' the Lord be daily calling to him, *To turn and live*, and confesseth *He delighteth not in the Death of a Sinner*; Yet for all this, will ye go on and die.

Also, The happy Condition of the People of GOD, in that they have such a Father, that had rather see their Conversion than Condemnation.

And lastly, To the Terror of the wicked and ungodly Men is set forth, that if they will not pray to GOD, that they may live with him in Heaven, they shall die and be tormented with the Devil and his Angles in Hell Fire.

The Sixty Ninth Edition. By *R. Baxter.*

Matth. xviii. 3. *Except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

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GOD's CALL TO *Unconverted* SINNERS.

Ezekiel xxxiii. 11.

Say unto them, As I live ſaith the Lord God, I have no Pleaſure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his Way and live: Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil Ways; for why will ye die, O Houſe of Iſrael?

THAT Great God that made the Heavens and the Earth, and all living Creatures therein, and hath redeemed you by his Son Chriſt Jeſus; ye that were loſt and undone Sinners; to you he hath ſent his Goſpel or glad Tidings of Peace, and to you hath he given his Privilege, *That as many as believe in him ſhall have eternal Life*; as many as turn to him ſhall live; and thoſe that turn not

shall die. This is the unchangeable Will and Law of God, that wicked Men must turn or die; for see the Words of Christ, *Matth* xviii. 3. *Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* And *John* iii. 3. *Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord.* And in *Isa.* xi. 5. *The Lord loveth the Righteous, but the Wicked his Soul hateth.* So that it is brought to this, that wicked Men must turn or die.

1*st*. From which Words you must observe first, the Piety and Love to lost and undone Souls, that he condescends to reason the Case with them thus, *Why will ye die?* That the Almighty and powerful God should stoop to poor sinful Dust and Ashes; herein is this great and wonderful Power shown, that he delighteth not in the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he would turn and live. God would not have them go on in the Way that leads to Hell, calls them daily by the Mouth of his Prophets, *to turn and live*, and tells them, *there is no Peace to the Wicked.* Isa. xlviii. 22. and xxxvii. 21. God telleth them, *The Love of the World is Enmity with God, and if any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.* Yet for all this, worldly they are, and worldly they will be. If the Way to Hell be thro' the World, than to Hell they will go.

Oh! that Men would see the Folly of their own Ways, and turn to the Lord, then should they see the Goodness and Beauty that is in the Ways of God, and the great Torments and Anguish that follows the Love of this wicked World. Oh! that wicked Men would thus converse with their own Souls, Is it so, that I must either turn or die, be converted or condemned? It is Time then for me to look about me; how have I foolishly ventured the Loss

Loss of my precious Soul then? Oh! God forbid, that I should neglect this any longer; must I turn, or die? Oh happy Day! Oh what a happy Hour is this, that's left me to repent in? Now will I set on a Resolution to get Assurance of my Salvation before I give any Sleep to my Eyes, or Slumber to mine Eye-lids. By the Grace of God, I will resolve presently to return; and to forsake my former Courses, and give up my self wholly to the Guidance of God: Shall the Lord be thus compassionate to my poor Soul, as to delight in my Salvation, and shall I, poor miserable Wretch, delight in my own Damnation? Shall God say unto me, turn? And shall I not resolve to turn?

1st. Consider First, That it is the inviolable and unchangeable Law of God, *That wicked Men must turn or die.* Rom. viii. 8. Now if any Man be in the Flesh, he cannot please God. *Psal* xi. 5. *The Lord loveth the Righteous, but the wicked his Soul hateth.* Psal. ix. 17. *The wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the Nations that forget God.*

The Texts are plain enough to the View of every poor Soul. If thou art one that believest, here's enough to satisfie thee, *That wicked and ungodly Men must either turn or die, be converted or condemned.* If you see not, 'tis because you are wilfully blind. To what Purpose doth God send his Messengers to warn you? If you will not believe God by the Mouth of his Prophets, who doth intreat you to be reconciled, yet you lend the deaf Ear to them; yet let me tell you, if you will not hear the Voice of God here, pronouncing the Sentence of Salvation to you, yet you shall hear his Voice pronouncing the Sentence of Condemnation against you hereafter.

I beseech you therefore, as you love your Souls, not to quarrel with God and his Word, but stop

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at it. Are you yet unconverted? Know e're long you must be converted or condemned. I beseech you therefore neglect not your own Happiness any longer, lest you be guilty of your own Blood. Read *Ezek.* xxxiii 8. And you shall see how the Cause stands: *When I say to the Wicked, O wicked Man, thou shalt surely die: if thou doest not speak to warn the wicked Man of his Ways, the wicked Man shall die in his Iniquity, but his Blood will I require at thy Hands.* You see there that the Ministers of the Gospel must preach, and you must hear: And let me tell you, it is more easy to hear of Hell than to feel it; and yet though you think it an unwelcome Doctrine, that the Ministers of the Gospel should gall your tender Ears with Truth, that seem so harsh and grievious, yet it is the Duty of every faithful Minister of Christ, to deal truly and faithfully with Souls; for ye shall in no wise escape, unless ye strive to enter in at the strait Gate, which leadeth unto Life: For Salvation and Condemnation will very suddenly bring all Things to an End, and when it is too late, ye shall hear some crying out, *What have I done? What simple Courses have I taken? Upon what low Account have I ventured the eternal Welfare of my poor Soul? I would I had considered this but a little before; but alas, now I am hurried into everlasting Destruction.* Consider this, all you that forget God, that your Day of Pleasures will last but a little while, your laughing will be turned into Mourning, your Joy into Anguish, your small and short Pleasures here will be turned into eternal Pains and Torments hereafter.

2*d.* Consider this all ye wicked and ungodly Sinners, that if you will yet unfeignedly turn to God, it is his Promise, that you shall live and not die. The Lord professeth: *That he taketh no*

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Delight in the Death of a Sinner, but would rather that he would turn and live. God hath not ſhut up the Door of Mercy againſt you, but you ſhut it againſt your ſelves; Mercy ſtays for you, Patience ſtays for you: Oh! how happy would you be, if you would but turn to him? And if you turn not, here is a Meſſenger of Wrath, Death to be pronounced againſt you? There is a Wrath you are already under, and a Death you are born under, and it is you your ſelves: There is alſo another Death, that is a remedileſs Death, and a much greater Torment than the firſt Death, and this Death falls upon all thoſe that are unconverted. God firſt offered you Mercy, if you will turn, and to thoſe that will not turn, he ſends his Meſſenger, that you muſt expect nothing but Condemnation: If you will come at the Call of Chriſt, you ſhall be converted; if you will become new Creatures, God hath not a Word of damning Wrath or Death to ſpeak to you; but on the contrary, Life, Joy, and Peace, Heaven and Happineſs, the eldeſt Sinner, the worſt Sinner of you all, if he will but turn he ſhall have Mercy and Salvation. Oh! then, if you love your Souls, turn, build on Chriſt the Rock, a new Foundation, learn to mortify the Fleſh, and live after the Spirit.

If you will but turn and come into a Way of Mercy, the Lord will be ready to entertain you: If you truſt in God for Salvation, he is engaged by his Promiſe to ſave you.

The Lord will be a Father to none but his Children, he will ſave none but thoſe that forſake the World, the Fleſh and the Devil; that come into his Family, to be Members of his Son, and have Communion with his Saints: But if they come not to Chriſt, and are condemned, 'tis long of themſelves, for God's Doors are open, and he's ſtill

ready

ready to receive you, if you turn to him with all your Heart, for his Promiſes are *Yea* and *Amen*, and he will not fail in the leaſt what he hath ſaid, *If ye repent, ye ſhall be ſaved*: And if he hath ſaid, *They that repent ſhall not be damned*: His Word ſhall be fulfilled, for God is Truth, and in him there is no Lie.

4*th*, Conſider this, that God taketh Delight in Mens Salvation, but not in their Damnation; he had rather they would turn and live, then go on in Sin and die. Converſion of Sinners is the Delight of his Soul; yet that Juſtice might be executed and fully vindicated, God is reſolved, if you will not be converted, you ſhall be condemned; yet God is ſo far your Friend, and againſt your Condemnation, as he beſeecheth you to be reconciled, and warns you of the great Danger you are in, and ſets before you Life and Death, and deſires you to accept of his Mercies, and not to damn your own Soul: But if this will not do, then he is reſolved upon your Condemnation, and commands his Prophets to ſay unto you theſe Words, *O wicked Man thou ſhalt ſurely die.* It is in vain, for it can never be, while you remain in this unconverted, dark and dead Condition, for in this State you are his Enemies by Nature: Yet for all this the Lord taketh Pleaſure in the Converſion of his Enemies; for if God had rather you be damned than ſaved, he would not ſo much entreat you by his daily Kindneſſes, by giving you the Means of this Life, to lead you to Repentance; he would not ſet ſo many Examples before your Eyes; no, nor wait on you ſo patiently as he doth from Day to Day, from Year to Year; theſe be not the Signs of one that taketh Pleaſure in your Death.

If it had been his Delight to have ſeen you go to Hell, how eaſily could he have done it long ago?

How

How eaſily before this Time could he have ſnatched thee away in thy Sins with a Curſe, or an Oath, or a Lie in thy Mouth, in thy Pride, in thy Drunkenneſs, in thy deriding the Ways of God? How eaſily could he have ſtopped thy Breath, or tam'd thee with his Plagues, and made thee ſober in another World? How eaſy a Matter is it for God to rule the Tongue of the profaneſt Railer? The Hands of the moſt malicious Perſecuter? God can make them know that they are but Worms: If God ſhould but frown upon one Sinner, how ſoon ſhould he drop into the Grave?

If God ſhould give Commiſſion unto Angels to go and deſtroy ten thouſand Sinners, it would quickly be done: How eaſily can God ſnatch a Sinner away in a Moment, and ſet them before his dreadful Majeſty, where they ſhall ſee ten thouſand glorious Angels waiting at his Throne? And now thou art at the Bar, pleading thy Cauſe, ſhould they ask thee theſe Words, *What haſt thou now to ſay againſt thy Creator, his Truth, his Servants, or his Ways?* Now plead thy Cauſe, what can'ſt thou ſay in Excuſe of thy Sins? Now give Account to thy Maker of thy Life, thy Time, and all the Mercies thou haſt had. Oh! would thy ſtubborn Soul have melted, thy proud Looks have beaten down, thy ſtout and proud Words turned in ſpeechleſs Silence. A Word of his Mouth would take thee off this preſent Life; if he ſhould ſay unto thee, Live no longer, or live in Hell, thou couldeſt not diſobey. What canſt thou ſay? Doth the Lord take Pleaſure in thy Death? Surely he doth not. If he did, he would not, he could not have ſweated the Drops of Blood for us; had he taken Pleaſure in our Death, he would not have been ſo long faſting, praying all Night, neither would he have ſuffered his bitter and curſed Death upon the Croſs, pouring out his Soul

a Sacrifice for our Sins, if he had delighted in our Death. If you had heard Christ but bemoaning the Estate of disobedient and impenitent People in *Matth.* Chap. xxiii. 37. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered thee, as a Hen gathereth her Chickens, and ye would not?* If you had heard Christ on the Cross praying for his Persecuters, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*: Would you have thought he had delighted in the Death of the Wicked? If you will not believe this, you have the Word and the Oath of the Lord for it, and dare you question the Word of God, and the Oath of God? For God hath sworn that his Pleasure is not in their Death, but in their Life, *Heb.* ix. 15, to 18.

Be intreated therefore, O unconverted Sinner, that heareſt these Words, to ponder a little with thy self, who is it that taketh Pleasure in thy Damnation? Certainly it is not God; he hath sworn he takes no Pleasure in it. You dare not say, you swear, you curse and lie, and blaspheme, and drink, and do all this to please God: Neither do any that bear the Image of God take Pleasure in your Death; God knows it is small Pleasure unto his Servants, the Ministers of the Gospel, to see how madly you venture your eternal State, and how wilfully you run into the very Flames of Hell.

It is small Pleasure for any of the Servants of God for to see your Carelesness in the Ways of God; what is it then that taketh Pleasure in your Death? None but the deadly Enemies of your Souls, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

The Devil takes Pleasure in your Sin and Death, and you cannot please him better, than to see you run into all Manner of Uncleanness, to see you drunk, to hear you curse, swear, and lie, this is his Delight

the Delight also of wicked Men; and it is pleasing to your Flesh, it is the Flesh that delighteth in Sports, in Lusts, and Idleness, that is the God that you serve.

O wretched Sinner! O miserable, undone Soul! should the Flesh be pleased before your Maker: Will you displease the Lord to please your Brutish Appetites? Is not God worthy to rule the Flesh? If he shall not rule it, he will not save it? Oh! then what will become of it! I fear it is preparing for its own displeasure. Doest thou love strong Drink and sweet Morsels, and thy Ease, and Sports, and to be some body in the World? But do you love the Curse of God with it? Do you love to stand trembling at the bar of God, and to be judged to everlasting Fire, and to be tormented with Devils for ever? Are the Pleasures here on Earth, which endure but for a Time, worth the suffering of eternal Fire?

Consider these Things before you go any further, which I am sure every Man hath Reason to consider that hath a Soul to save or lose; therefore, if you will go and die, rather than turn and live, remember it was not to please God, but the Devil, the World, and the Flesh; and if Men will damn themselves to please themselves, and run into endless Torments for Delight, and have not the Wit nor the Grace to hearken after God or Man, that would reclaim them; but what Remedy, but they must take what they get?

Fourthly, Consider this also, that the Lord hath quit himself of the Death of Sinners: If they are condemned, it is long of themselves; they die because they will die. O unprofitable rebellious Children, that will not hear the Voice of their Father! May not God say to you, as he said concerning the unprofitable Vineyard? *Isa* v. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Judge I pray betwixt me and my Vineyard; what could I have done*

done more than I have done? I planted it in a fruitful Soil, I fenced it, and gathered out the Stones, and set the choiceſt Vine, and it will not grow and bring forth Fruit.

Thus may God ſay, and lament over *England*, Oh, unprofitable *England*! What ſhall I do with you? I have planted you a glorious Church, I have watered you with the Due of the Goſpel, I have made you Men, and endued you with Reaſon, I have given you a righteous and perfect Law, and you have broken it, you have deſpiſed my Goſpel, and you have undone your Souls. *May* not God in Juſtice take the Light of his Goſpel from us, and give it unto others that may make a better Improvement of it to his Honour, and their eternal Welfare? What could God have done more than he hath done for us? Hath he not waited long on us? Hath he not entreated us to turn by the Mouth of his faithful Miniſters? Hath not his Holy Spirit often been ſtriving with our Hearts, and ſaying to our Souls, Turn, turn, Sinner, whither art thou going, doſt thou know what will be the End? How long wilt thou hate thy Friend, and love thy Enemies? When wilt thou deliver up thy ſelf to God, and give Chriſt Jeſus thy Saviour and Redeemer full Poſſeſſion of thy Soul? When ſhall that once be? Hath not the Spirit thus pleaded with thee? Hath not Life been ſet before thee, and the Joys of Heaven? And hath not the Certainty of everlaſting Torments of the Damned been declared unto you? If you die now, it is becauſe you will die, *You will not have this Man to reign over you*, Luke xix. and the 1. v.

O you fooliſh People and unwiſe, *Why do you requite the Lord thus?* Iſa. i. 2, 3, 4. Why do you forſake the Lord for nothing? Why do you forge eternal Life to hunt after the Chaff and Feathers of the World? *Wherefore do you ſpend your Money*

for

for that which is not Bread, and your Labour for that which satisfieth not? Isa. lv 1, 2, 3. Awake now and see your own Folly, *Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near;* It is the Lord promiseth, if the wicked Man will forsake his evil Way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts and turn to the Lord, he will have Mercy on him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.

The Devil cannot pardon Sin; no, it is God's Power only, so he hath a Will to pardon, how oft hath he proclaimed free Invitations to poor Sinners? *Rev.* xxii. 17. *Let him that is a thirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely.*

O Stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in Hearts and Ears, that thus are willing to ruin themselves: When God hath called you, you would not come. How know you, how soon you may provoke God to resolve you shall not taste of the Wedding Supper? If you die unconverted, all the World cannot save you. O wretched Sinner! Why will you be so cruel to your selves, know not you this, which is a real Truth, that you must turn or burn? If you keep your Sins, you must keep the Curse of God with them; You Love your Lusts, your Drunkenness, your Gluttony, and will not let them go. Would you have them bring you to Heaven? If you expect that, it is impossible; for there entereth none that are unclean *Rev.* xxi. 12 *For what Communion hath Light with Darkness? Or what Concord hath Christ with Belial?* You see then I hope by this Time, the Case is clear, that you must resolve to turn or die.

Object. But you will ask me, how shall we turn, we have no Power of our selves? I will therefore give you a few Helps by the Way, before I conclude. Ah poor sinful Soul, that would be converted and

turn

turn to the Lord, consider the Necessity and Nature of Conversion, you must here consider.

1st. From what you must turn; That is in a Word, from Carnal-self, from the Flesh, that would be pleased before God, From the World, that is, the enticing Bait to allure your Souls from the Devil, the secret Angler for your Souls, and from all wilful Sins; you must turn to God the End, and to Christ the Way to the Father.

2d. The second Help is this, Attend on the Word of God, that is the ordinary Means to turn Souls to God; be often in hearing, reading, and meditating upon the holy Scriptures.

3d. To be frequent in Prayer to God, confess and lament before God your former Lives; beseech him to pardon what is past, and to give you his Spirit to lead you into his Way, and beg of him to be your Guide, and your Keeper, to save you from the subtile Temptations of the Devil who watcheth for your Souls.

4th. Give up your self wholly to the Lord Jesus Christ, the true Physician of your Soul. *John* xiv. 6. *For there is no other Name under Heaven, by which you can be saved; 'tis he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, there is no coming to the Father, but by him.*

5th. If you mean to turn to Christ, do it believingly, trust God with all you have, entertain no low Thoughts of God: Let this be upon your Heart continually, that God is able to save to the utmost all that come unto him by Faith.

6th. And lastly, Be sure to neglect no Time, but do it speedily. To Day, while it is called to Day, hear the Lord's Voice, and harden not your Heart. If you be not willing to turn to Day, you will not be willing to turn to Morrow. Call this to Mind, that as long as you neglect this Work, you are un-

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der the Guilt of many thouſand Sins, and under God's Wrath, and you ſtand at the very Brink of Hell: Go then preſently, and fly as for your Lives; for you have ſtay'd too long already, and have wronged God too long; for his ſake therefore turn, if not for his, Oh! for your own precious Soul's ſake, reſolve to turn and live; ſtand not wavering any longer, for it is not a Matter of trifling, but of eternal Moment; for if you die in your Sins, you die eternally, and then you are undone for ever.

Let me add one Uſe more, which ſhall be of Terror, to affrighten thoſe that are not reſolved yet to turn.

Uſe. You unconverted ſinful Wretches, that always vex the Holy Ghoſt, as your Fathers did, ſo do you: Know aſſuredly, that the righteous God, will not be mocked: For if you turn not, you ſhall ſurely die and be damned; 'tis as ſure as if it were already done; at the dreadful Day of the Lord's appearing, the Hills nor the Mountains ſhall not hide you from the Preſence of the Living God. Are not you one that have neglected the tender Offers of the Goſpel? Have you not turned your Back againſt God? Is it not juſt then, that God ſhould turn his Back towards you, when you call and cry unto him? Have you not deſerved this Sentence to be pronounced againſt you? *Go ye curſed unto everlaſting Burnings*? What ſhall I ſay to you? O careleſs and unregarding Souls, that wilfully run into your own Deſtruction? What can you ſay when you appear before the great God? Can you lay the Blame on him? No, you cannot, he hath left you without Excuſe, for he hath done his part as to our Salvation; if we die, then it is becauſe we will die, and be damned: Had you been but willing to have been ſaved, you might have lain in *Abraham's* Boſom, but now you muſt, to the grief of your Friends, be tormented in Hell with Devils, and

and shall not have this Request granted you, *To have one Drop of Water to cool your Tongue*; whereas you might have enjoyed Heaven and Happiness after Death if converted; Now you shall enjoy nothing but Hell and Horror, because you die unconverted.

Therefore be perswaded all ye poor miserable Souls, that are as Slaves to Satan, be perswaded while you have a Day of Grace, to turn and live, and not go on in Sin, and die.

Which shall be the daily Prayers of thy poor, and unworthy Servants, for the Sake of Christ.

R. B.

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The End of all, is Sinner turn,
Left in Hell Flames thou ever burn.

FINIS.

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